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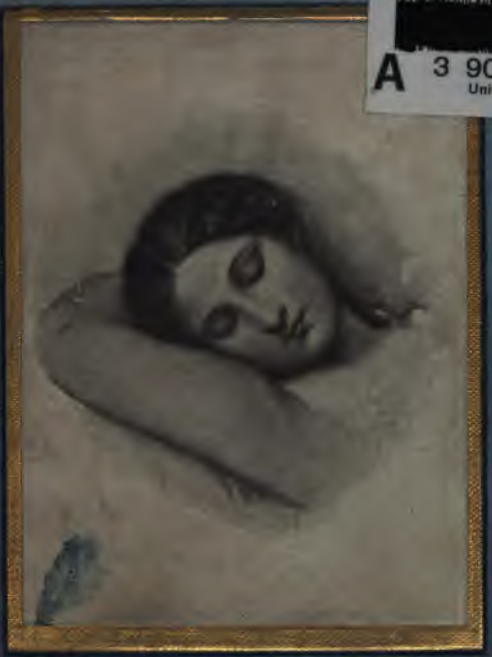

MY LADY SLEEPS

by KATHARINE S. PAGE

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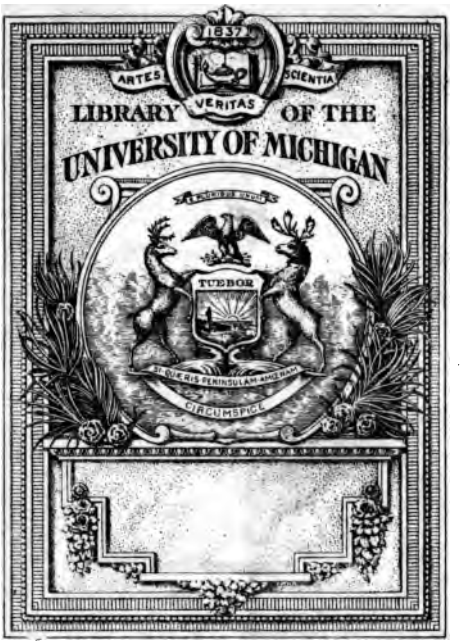
University of Michigan – BUHR



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MY LADY SLEEPS

MY LADY SLEEPS

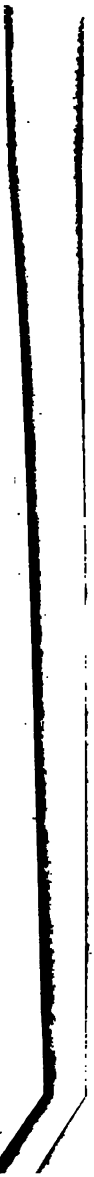
SELECTED BY

KATHERINE S. PAGE

Now blessings light on him who first invented this same sleep

Sancho Panza

BOSTON
L. C. PAGE AND COMPANY
(INCORPORATED)
1899



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University Press

JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U. S

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INTRODUCTION.

THE compiler of this collection of poems has granted me a favor which honors me beyond my just deserts in permitting me to write an introduction for her book. Yet am I somewhat in the condition of the old English admiral who said, "I have taken that in hand which I know not how to accomplish," for it would seem as if the preface to such a book should have a touch of beauty which it is beyond my power to give. She has made so beautiful her house of sleep and dreams that any porch which I can make to it, though I should do my best and succeed beyond my bravest hope, must be inadequate. And, indeed, I am strongly tempted to avail myself frankly of what Sir Thomas Browne has said upon this subject in his *Religio Medici*, for I do not know of any one who has discoursed upon this matter more delightfully than he. I am by no means sure that the prose parts

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of his lucubration are not more poetical than the noble "Colloquy with God," which Mrs. Page has chosen for one of the jewels in her carcanet. Writing of Sleep, he says, "It is the litigation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and our waking conceptions do not match the Fancies of our Sleeps. . . . Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams; and this time also would I chuse for my devotions: but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that that hath passed." Many of us are of a like persuasion, and in our sleep have had such soaring thoughts and gracious satisfactions as never in our waking hours.

The wonders and the mysteries that are very near to us, and especially those that have a frequent and regular recurrence, like the diurnal pomp of stars, are apt to fail of their due recognition; and yet, although one may not dare to say that the mysteries of sleep have had a recognition equal to their significance, they have had much dutiful regard. Mrs. Page's collection is an ample

proof of this, and if she had been as anxious to make her collection full as she has been to make it choice, the proof would have been more complete, though not without some cost to our delight. Even Science has become poetical when she has turned her thought to the phenomena of sleep and dreams, and the

"Enamoured architect of airy rhyme"

could not do better than to take counsel with the psychologists when he would find fresh material wherewith to build some lofty house of song.

We cannot be too grateful to those who help us to idealize those aspects of our lives which are so familiar that they are in danger of being

"Missed in the commonplace of miracle."

With such friends and aiders those who have written these beautiful poems about sleep must ever have a high and honored place. Nor is it any slight approximation to their grace to bring from near and far the flowers which they have scattered and bind them into one fragrant wreath, — not poppies all, albeit the most of them are these. For one who has done this, I bespeak the gratitude of

many who, at the evening's end, reading one or more of these lovely things, will woo and win a softer sleep thereby, and sink into a zone of lovelier dreams, and wake with better heart than if their bed-time thoughts were seasoned only with such influences as any chance may bring.

JOHN WHITE CHADWICK.

PREFATORY NOTE.

ALTHOUGH several books of bedtime songs have been published, no anthology, I believe, has yet been made of the poetry of sleep. It is the aim in this volume to bring together the best verse on the general theme of sleep, including dreams, rest, and bed-time songs.

As it is impossible in a small volume to include all the beautiful verse written on sleep, I have regretfully omitted much that might well find a place in a larger collection.

It has been thought best not to include poetry touching on the theme of death, lest a melancholy note should intrude where peace and joy prevail; but a very few such poems have been almost of necessity included, owing to their especial beauty and significance. I wish particularly to thank Mr. Dana Estes and Mr. Frederick L. Knowles for their kind encouragement and assistance, which

have been invaluable in this work. My thanks are also due for the use of copyrighted poems, to many authors and publishers, among whom are the following:

Louise Chandler Moulton, Carrie Shaw Rice.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co.:

Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Alice Cary, Edgar Fawcett, Louise Imogen Guiney, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Thomas William Parsons, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Celia Thaxter, and a poem from "Greek Poets in English Verse."

Selections from the foregoing writers are included "by permission of and by special arrangement with Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers of the works of said authors."

The Cassell Publishing Co.:

Robert Burns Wilson.

The Century Co.:

Richard Watson Gilder.

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Harriet Prescott Spofford, John B. Tabb.

Lamson, Wolffe & Co.:

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G. P. Putnam's Sons:

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Roberts Brothers:

Julia C. R. Dorr, William C. Gannett, Helen Hunt Jackson.

Frederick A. Stokes Co.:

Samuel Minturn Peck.

K. S. PAGE.

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SLEEP.

My Lady Sleeps.

Serenade.

From "The Spanish Student."

STARS of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Wind of the summer night!
  Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light!
    She sleeps!
  My lady sleeps!
    Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!
  Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch! while in slumbers light
    She sleeps!
  My lady sleeps!
    Sleeps!

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Sleep.

FROM "THE ANCIENT MARINER."

OH, sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light — almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE.

To Sleep.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep!
And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names;
The very sweetest Fancy culls or frames,
When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep!
Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep
In rich reward all suffering; Balm that tames
All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and aims
Takest away, and into souls dost creep,
Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,
I surely not a man ungently made,
Call thee worst Tyrant by which flesh is crost?
Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,
Mere slave of them who never for thee prayed,
Still last to come where thou art wanted most!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Sonnet: to Sleep.

LOCK up, fair lids, the treasure of my heart,
Preserve those beams, this age's only light;
To her sweet sense, sweet Sleep, some ease impart,
Her sense too weak to bear her Spirit's might,
And while, O Sleep, thou closest up her sight!
Her sight, where Love did forge his fairest dart, —
O harbor all her parts in easeful plight;
Let no strange dream make her fair body start:
But yet, O dream, if thou wilt not depart
In this rare subject from thy common right,
But wilt thyself in such a seat delight:
Then take my shape and play a lover's part,
Kiss her from me, and say unto her sprite,
Till her eyes shine, I live in darkest night.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

Care-Charming Sleep.

CARE-CHARMING Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
On this afflicted prince, fall like a cloud,
In gentle showers; give nothing that is loud
Or painful to his slumbers; easy, light,
And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain
Like hollow murmuring wind or silver rain;
Into this prince gently, O gently slide,
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride.

JOHN FLETCHER.

Sleep.

WHEN to soft Sleep we give ourselves away,
And in a dream as in a fairy bark
Drift on and on through the enchanted dark
To purple daybreak, little thought we pay
To that sweet-bitter world we know by day.
We are clean quit of it, as is a lark
So high in heaven no human eye can mark
The thin, swift pinion cleaving through the gray.
Till we awake ill fate can do no ill;
The resting heart shall not take up again
The heavy load that yet must make it bleed;
For this brief space the loud world's voice is still,
No faintest echo of it brings us pain.
How will it be when we shall sleep indeed?

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

Sonnet.

CARE-CHARMER, Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care return.

And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth:
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.

Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising Sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow:

Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

SAMUEL DANIEL.

A Sleeping Beauty.

SLEEP on! and dream of Heaven awhile!
Though shut so close thy laughing eyes,
Thy rosy lips still wear a smile,
And move, and breathe delicious sighs.

Ah! now soft blushes tinge her cheeks
And mantle o'er her neck of snow;
Ah! now she murmurs, now she speaks,
What most I wish, and fear, to know.

She starts, she trembles, and she weeps!
Her fair hands folded on her breast;
— And now, how like a saint she sleeps!
A seraph in the realms of rest!

Sleep on secure! Above control,
Thy thoughts belong to Heaven and thee;
And may the secret of thy soul
Remain within its sanctuary!

SAMUEL ROGERS.

Watching.

SLEEP, love, sleep!
The dusty day is done.
Lo! from afar the freshening breezes sweep
Wide over groves of balm,
Down from the towering palm,
In at the open casement cooling run,
And round thy lowly bed,
Thy bed of pain,
Bathing thy patient head,
Like grateful showers of rain,
They come;
While the white curtains, waving to and fro,
Fan the sick air;
And pitying the shadows come and go,
With gentle human care,
Compassionate and dumb.
The dusty day is done,
The night begun;
While prayerful watch I keep,
Sleep, love, sleep!
Is there no magic in the touch
Of fingers thou dost love so much?

WATCHING.

Fain would they scatter poppies o'er thee now;
Or, with its mute caress,
The tremulous lip some soft nepenthe press
Upon thy weary lid and aching brow;
While prayerful watch I keep,
Sleep, love, sleep!

On the pagoda spire
The bells are swinging,
Their little golden circlet in a flutter
With tales the wooing winds have dared to utter
Till all are ringing,
As if a choir
Of golden-nested birds in heaven were singing;
And with a lulling sound
The music floats around,
And drops like balm into the drowsy ear;
Commingling with the hum
Of the Sepoy's distant drum,
And lazy beetle ever droning near.
Sounds these of deepest silence born,
Like night made visible by morn;
So silent that I sometimes start
To hear the throbbings of my heart,
And watch, with shivering sense of pain,
To see thy pale lids lift again.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

The lizard with his mouse-like eyes,
Peeps from the mortise in surprise
At such strange quiet after day's harsh din;
Then boldly ventures out,
And looks about,
And with his hollow feet
Treads his small evening beat,
Darting upon his prey
In such a tricky, winsome sort of way,
His delicate marauding seems no sin.
And still the curtains swing,
But noiselessly;
The bells a melancholy murmur ring,
And tears were in the sky:
More heavily the shadows fall,
Like the black foldings of a pall
Where juts the rough beam from the wall;
The candles flare
With fresher gusts of air;
The beetle's drone
Turns to a dirge-like, solitary moan;
Night deepens, and I sit, in cheerless doubt, alone.

EMILY CHUBBUCK JUDSON.

Sleep.

FROM "ASTROPHEL AND STELLA."

COME, Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low.
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts, Despair at me doth throw;
O, make in me those civil wars to cease:
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed;
A chamber, deaf to noise, and blind to light;
A rosy garland, and a weary head.
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

Sleep.

I AM the crony of the Dark,
The bosom friend of Death;
My craft is lighter than a lark,
And silenter than breath.

FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES.

To Sleep.

COME Sleep and kiss my eyelids down —
Let me forget
Hope's treachery, and Fortune's frown,
And Life's vain fret: —
And would you hold me fast, dear sleep,
I need not wake,
Since they wake not who used to weep
For my poor sake.

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

To Sleep.

HENCE with thy palsied hand, detested Sleep!
Go seal the lids of wretchedness and care:
Seek thou the couch where injured beauties weep,
And rescue these one moment from despair.

For me, I charge thee o'er my busy brain
Thy stupefying influence never fling;
Fancy is there, with all her lovely train,
And dreads the shadow of thy raven wing.

But when exhausted is my lingering breath,
And songs of joy, and every transport o'er,
One sleep I 'll take, the last cold sleep of death,
To wake where thou can'st never plague me more.

WILLIAM CLIFFTON.

Sleep.

WHO calls thee "gentle Sleep"? — O rare coquette,
Who comest crowned with poppies, thou should'st wear
Nettles instead, or thistles, in thy hair;
For thou 'rt the veriest elf that ever yet
Made weary mortals sigh and toss and fret!
Thou dost float softly through the drowsy air,
Hovering as if to kiss my lips and share
My restless pillow: but ere I can set
My arms to clasp thee, without sign or speech,
Save one swift, mocking smile, thou 'rt out of reach.
Yet, sometime, thou, or one as like to thee
As sister is to sister, shalt draw near
With such soft lullabies for my dull ear,
That neither life nor love shall waken me!

JULIA C. R. DORR.

Evening on the Campus.

BEHIND a screen of western hills
The sunset color fades to-night;
Along the arching corridors
Long shadows steal with footsteps light.
The banners of the day are furled;
Thro' darkening space the twilight creeps
And smooths the forehead of the world
Until he sleeps.

The oak-trees closer draw their hoods;
A bird, belated, wings his dim,
Uncertain flight, and far above
A star looks down and laughs at him;
The sky and mountains melt in one;
Tall gum-trees range their ranks around;
The white walk marks its length upon
The velvet ground.

From out the dusk the chimney points,
Like guiding finger to the skies;
Down drops the curtain of the night,
And all the plain in darkness lies,

EVENING ON THE CAMPUS.

When, as the college buildings seem
To lose their form in shapeless mass,
The lights shine out as poppies gleam
Amid the grass.

CAROLUS AGER.
(Charles Kellogg Field.)

To Sleep.

O GENTLE Sleep! do they belong to thee
These twinklings of oblivion? Thou dost love
To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,
A captive, never wishing to be free.
This tiresome night, O Sleep! thou art to me
A Fly, that up and down doth shove
Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,
Now on the water, vexed with mockery.
I have no pain that calls for patience, no;
Hence am I cross and peevish as a child:
Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,
Yet ever willing to be reconciled:
O gentle Creature, do not use me so,
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Sleep, Angry Beauty.

SLEEP, angry beauty, sleep and fear not me!
For who a sleeping lion dares provoke?
It shall suffice me here to sit and see
Those lips shut up that never kindly spoke:
What sight can more content a lover's mind
Than beauty seeming harmless, if not kind?

My words have charm'd her, for secure she sleeps,
Though guilty much of wrong done to my love;
And in her slumber, see! she close-eyed weeps:
Dreams often more than waking passions move.
Plead, Sleep, my cause, and make her soft like thee:
That she in peace may wake and pity me.

T. CAMPION.

Summer Night on Lake Geneva.

FROM "CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE."

IT is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse,
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

. . . . . .

SUMMER NIGHT ON LAKE GENEVA.

The sky is changed! and such a change! O night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling clouds among,
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night: — Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 't is black, — and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

LORD BYRON.

The Bell-Man.

FROM noise of scare-flies rest ye free,
From murders benedicite;
From all mischances that may fright
Your pleasing slumbers in the night,
Mercie secure ye all, and keep
The goblin from ye while ye sleep.
Past one aclock, and almost two;
My masters all, good day to you.

ROBERT HERRICK.

Sonnet to Sleep.

O SOFT embalmer of the still midnight,
Shutting with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embower'd from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close,
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities;
Then save me, or the passed day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, —
Save me from envious conscience, that still lords
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a mole;
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
And seal the hushed casket of my soul.

JOHN KEATS.

Sleeping and Watching.

SLEEP on, baby, on the floor,
Tired of all the playing:
Sleep with smile the sweeter for
That, you dropped away in.
On your curls' full roundness stand
Golden lights serenely;
One cheek, pushed out by the hand,
Folds the dimple inly:
Little head and little foot
Heavy laid for pleasure.
Underneath the lids half shut,
Slants the shining azure.
Open soul in noonday sun,
So you lie and slumber:
Nothing evil having done,
Nothing can encumber.

I, who cannot sleep as well,
Shall I sigh to view you?
Or sigh further to foretell
All that may undo you?

SLEEPING AND WATCHING.

Nay, keep smiling, little child,
Ere the sorrow neareth;
I will smile too! patience mild
Pleasure's token weareth.
Nay, keep sleeping before loss:
I shall sleep though losing!
As by cradle, so by cross,
Sure is the reposing.

And God knows who sees us twain,
Child at childish leisure,
I am near as tired of pain
As you seem of pleasure.
Very soon too, by His grace
Gently wrapt around me,
Shall I show as calm a face,
Shall I sleep as soundly.
Differing in this, that you
Clasp your playthings, sleeping,
While my hand shall drop the few
Given to my keeping:
Differing in this, that I
Sleeping shall be colder,
And in waking presently,
Brighter to beholder:
Differing in this beside
(Sleeper, have you heard me?

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Do you move, and open wide
Eyes of wonder toward me?) —
That while you I thus recall
From your sleep, I solely,
Me from mine an angel shall,
With revelie holy.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Invocation to Sleep.

FROM "VALENTINIAN."

COME, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
Lock me in delight awhile;
Let some pleasing dreams beguile
All my fancies, that from thence
I may feel an influence,
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy!
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought,
Through an idle fancy wrought:
O, let my joys have some abiding!

JOHN FLETCHER.

Sleep on till Day.

FROM A HIGHLAND TUNE: "SLEEP ON TILL DAY."

O SLEEP on till day, my love, sleep on till day!
No trouble assail thee, nor danger affray!—
But sleep on till day, my love, sleep on till day.
Airs round thee trembling
Love sighs resembling,
Linger a moment and vanish away—
Vanish till day, my love, vanish till day.

The pale stars set hourly in western sky gray;
The kind hours, they laugh as they hurry away;
They know 't will be day soon, ah, beautiful day!
Crownèd to-morrow—
End of my sorrow!
Meeting with never a farewell to say—
O sleep on till day, my love, sleep on till day!

Yet life 's but a vision too lovely to stay;
Morn passes, noon hastens, and pleasures decay;
And evening approaches, and closes the day:
Then laid with praises
Under the daisies:
Smiling we 'll creep to one pillow of clay,
And sleep on till day, my love, sleep on till day.

DINAH MARIA MULOCK (CRAIK).

At Night.

THE sky is dark, and dark the bay below
Save where the midnight city's pallid glow
Lies like a lily white
On the black pool of night.

O rushing steamer, hurry on thy way
Across the swirling Kills and gusty bay,
To where the eddying tide
Strikes hard the city's side!

For there, between the river and the sea,
Beneath that glow, — the lily's heart to me, —
A sleeping mother mild,
And by her breast a child!

RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

Sleep.

SLEEP is no servant of the will, —
It has caprices of its own;
When most pursued, 't is swiftly gone;
When courted least, it lingers still.
With its vagaries long perplexed,
I turned and turned my restless sconce,
Till, one bright night, I thought at once
I 'd master it; — so hear my text!

When sleep will tarry, I begin
My long and my accustomed prayer;
And in a twinkling sleep is there,
Through my bed-curtains peeping in;
When sleep hangs heavy on my eyes,
I think of debts I fain would pay;
And then, as flies night's shade from day,
Sleep from my heavy eyelids flies.

And thus controlled, the winged one bends
E'en his fantastic will to me;
And, strange yet true, both I and he
Are friends, — the very best of friends:

SLEEP.

We are a happy, wedded pair,
And I the lord and he the dame;
Our bed, our board, our hours the same;
And we 're united everywhere.

I 'll tell you where I learned to school
This wayward sleep: — a whispered word
From a church-going hag I heard, —
And tried it, — for I was no fool.
So from that very hour I knew,
That having ready prayers to pray,
And having many debts to pay,
Will serve for sleep and waking too.

FROM THE SPANISH.

Slumber, oh Slumber.

"SLUMBER, oh slumber; if sleeping thou mak'st
My heart beat so wildly, I 'm lost if thou wak'st."
Thus sung I to a maiden,
Who slept one summer's day,
And, like a flower o 'erladen
With too much sunshine, lay.
Slumber, oh slumber, etc.

"Breathe not, oh breathe not, ye winds, o'er her cheeks;
If mute thus she charm me, I 'm lost when she speaks."
Thus sing I, while, awaking,
She murmurs words that seem
As if her lips were taking
Farewell of some sweet dream.
Breathe not, oh breathe not, etc.

THOMAS MOORE.

Lines.

ON SEEING MY WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN SLEEPING IN THE SAME CHAMBER.

AND has the earth lost its so spacious round,
The sky its blue circumference above,
That in this little chamber there is found
Both earth and heaven — my universe of love!
All that my God can give me, or remove,
Here sleeping, save myself, in mimic death.
Sweet that in this small compass I behove
To live their living, and to breathe their breath!
Almost I wish that, with one common sigh,
We might resign all mundane care and strife,
And seek together that transcendent sky,
Where Father, Mother, Children, Husband, Wife,
Together pant in everlasting life.

THOMAS HOOD.

Sleep.

FROM HENRY IV. PART II. ACT III. SC. I.

O SLEEP, O gentle Sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
Why rather, Sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody?
O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile,
In loathsome beds; and leav'st the kingly couch,
A watch-case, or a common 'larum bell?
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude, imperious surge;
And in the visitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
With deafening clamours in the slippery clouds,

That, with the hurly, death itself awakes?
Canst thou, O partial Sleep! give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
And, in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king? Then, happy lowly clown!
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

SHAKESPEARE.

Oft in the Stilly Night.

OFT in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so linked together
I 've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone

OFT IN THE STILLY NIGHT.

Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

THOMAS MOORE.

Sleep.

O HAPPY sleep! that bear'st upon thy breast
The blood-red poppy of enchanting rest,
Draw near me through the stillness of this place
And let thy low breath move across my face,
As faint winds move above a poplar's crest.

The broad seas darken slowly in the west;
The wheeling sea-birds call from nest to nest;
Draw near and touch me, leaning out of space,
O happy Sleep!

There is no sorrow hidden or confess'd,
There is no passion uttered or suppress'd,
Thou canst not for a little while efface;
Enfold me in thy mystical embrace,
Thou sovereign gift of God, most sweet, most blest,
O happy Sleep!

ADA LOUISE MARTIN.

My Lady Sleep.

IN cool gray cloisters walks my Lady Sleep,
  Telling her smooth beads slowly, one by one;
Along the wall the stealthy shadows creep;
  Night holds the world in thrall, and day is done.

Sometimes, while winds sigh soft above her head,
  Down the long garden path my Lady strays,
And kneeling by the pansies' purple bed,
  Counts the small faces in the moonlit haze.

Sometimes she lies upon the silver sands,
  Following the sea-birds, as they wheel and dip;
Or idly clasps, in still persistent hands,
  The shining grains that through her fingers slip.

Or paces long, with flowing locks all wet,
  Where the low thunder booms forevermore,
And the great waves no man hath numbered yet,
  Roll, one by one, to break upon the shore.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Sometimes she counts the brightening twilight stars
  The daisies smiling in the meadow grass,
The slow kine trailing through the pasture bars,
  The white sheep loitering in the mountain pass.

But evermore her hands are cool and calm —
  Her quiet voice is ever hushed and low;
And evermore her tranquil lips breathe balm,
  And silent as a dream her garments flow.

She comes, she goes — whence, whither — who can tell?
  Angels of God, do ye her secret keep?
Know ye the talisman, the sign, the spell,
  The mystic password of my Lady Sleep?

JULIA C. R. DORR.

A Picture.

THE farmer sat in his easy chair
  Smoking his pipe of clay,
While his hale old wife with busy care
  Was clearing his dinner away;
A sweet little girl with fine blue eyes
On her grandfather's knee was catching flies.

The old man laid his hand on her head,
  With a tear on his wrinkled face;
He thought how often her mother, dead,
  Used to sit in the self-same place;
As the tear stole down from his half-shut eye,
"Don't smoke!" said the child, "how it makes you
  cry!"

The house-dog lay, stretched out on the floor
  Where the shade after noon used to steal,
The busy old wife by the open door
  Was turning the spinning-wheel,
And the old brass clock on the mantletree
Had plodded along to almost three.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Still the farmer sat in his easy chair,
  While close to his heaving breast
The moistened brow and the cheek so fair
  Of his sweet grandchild were pressed;
His head, bent down, on her soft hair lay:
Fast asleep were they both, that summer day!

CHARLES GAMAGE EASTMAN.

Sleep's Threshold.

WHAT footstep but has wandered free and far
Amid that Castle of Sleep whose walls were planned
By no terrestrial craft, no human hand,
With towers that point to no recorded star?
Here sorrows, memories, and remorses are,
Roaming the long, dim rooms or galleries grand;
Here the lost friends our spirits yet demand
Gleam through mysterious doorways left ajar.

But of the uncounted throngs that ever win
The halls where Slumber's dusky witcheries rule,
Who, after wakening, may reveal aright
By what phantasmal means he entered in?—
What porch of cloud, what vapory vestibule,
What stairway quarried from the mines of night?

EDGAR FAWCETT.

To a Lady Sleeping.

O THOU, whose fringéd lids I gaze upon,
Through whose dim brain the wingéd dreams are borne,
Unroof the shrines of clearest vision,
In honor of the silver fleckèd morn;
Long hath the white wave of the virgin light
Driven back the billow of the dreamful dark.
Thou all unwittingly prolongest night,
Though long ago listening the poiséd lark,
With eyes dropt downward through the blue serene,
Over heaven's parapet the angels lean.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

A Child Asleep.

HOW he sleepeth, having drunken
Weary childhood's mandragore!
From its pretty eyes have sunken
Pleasures to make room for more;
Sleeping near the withered nosegay which he pulled the day before.

Nosegays! leave them for the waking;
Throw them earthward where they grew;
Dim are such beside the breaking
Amaranths he looks unto:
Folded eyes see brighter colors than the open ever do.

Heaven-flowers, rayed by shadows golden
From the palms they sprang beneath,
Now perhaps divinely holden,
Swing against him in a wreath:
We may think so from the quickening of his bloom and of his breath.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Vision unto vision calleth
While the young child dreameth on:
Fair, O dreamer, thee befalleth
With the glory thou hast won!
Darker wast thou in the garden yestermorn by summer sun.

We should see the spirits ringing
Round thee, were the clouds away:
'T is the child-heart draws them, singing
In the silent-seeming clay —
Singing! stars that seem the mutest go in music all the way.

As the moths around a taper,
As the bees around a rose,
As the gnats around a vapor,
So the spirits group and close
Round about a holy childhood as if drinking its repose.

Shapes of brightness overlean thee,
Flash their diadems of youth
On the ringlets which half screen thee,
While thou smilest — not in sooth
Thy smile, but the overfair one, dropt from some ætherial mouth.

A CHILD ASLEEP.

Haply it is angels' duty,
  During slumber, shade by shade
  To fine down this childish beauty
  To the thing it must be made
Ere the world shall bring it praises, or the tomb shall
    see it fade.

Softly, softly! make no noises!
  Now he lieth dead and dumb;
  Now he hears the angels' voices
  Folding silence in the room:
Now he muses deep the meaning of the Heaven-words
    as they come.

Speak not! he is consecrated;
  Breathe no breath across his eyes:
  Lifted up and separated
  On the hand of God he lies
In a sweetness beyond touching, held in cloistral
    sanctities.

Could ye bless him, father — mother,
  Bless the dimple in his cheek?
  Dare ye look at one another
  And the benediction speak?
Would ye not break out in weeping and confess your-
    selves too weak?

MY LADY SLEEPS.

He is harmless, ye are sinful;
Ye are troubled, he, at ease;
From his slumber, virtue winful
Floweth outward with increase.
Dare not bless him! but be blessèd by his peace, and go in peace.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Ballade of Sleep.

THE hours are passing slow,
I hear their weary tread
Clang from the tower, and go
Back to their kinsfolk dead.
Sleep! death's twin brother dread!
Why dost thou scorn me so?
The wind's voice overhead
Long wakeful here I know,
And music from the steep
Where waters fall and flow.
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

All sounds that might bestow
Rest on the fever'd bed,
All slumb'rous sounds and low
Are mingled here and wed,
And bring no drowsihed.
Shy dreams flit to and fro
With shadowy hair dispread;
With wistful eyes that glow,
And silent robes that sweep.
Thou wilt not hear me; no?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

MY LADY SLEEPS.

What cause hast thou to show
Of sacrifice unsped?
Of all thy slaves below
I most have laborèd
With service sung and said;
Have cull'd such buds as blow,
Soft poppies white and red,
Where thy still gardens grow,
And Lethe's waters weep.
Why, then, art thou my foe?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

ENVOY.

Prince, ere the dark be shred
By golden shafts, ere low
And long the shadows creep;
Lord of the wand of lead,
Soft-footed as the snow,
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

ANDREW LANG.

The Sleeper.

AT midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain-top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps! — and lo! where lies
(Her casement open to the skies)
Irene, with her Destinies!
Oh, lady bright! can it be right —
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop —

MY LADY SLEEPS.

The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully— so fearfully —
Above the closed and fringèd lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid
That o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,

THE SLEEPER.

For her may some tall vault unfold —
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And wingèd panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls
Of her grand family funerals —
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone —
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

"Let not the sluggish sleep."

LET not the sluggish sleep
Close up thy waking eye,
Until with judgment deep
Thy daily deeds thou try:
He that one sin in conscience keeps
When he to quiet goes,
More vent'rous is than he that sleeps
Witb twenty mortal foes!

ANONYMOUS.

To Sleep.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;
I have thought of all by turns, and yet to lie
Sleepless! and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees;
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep, by any stealth:
So do not let me wear to-night away:
Without thee, what is all the morning's wealth?

WORDSWORTH.

Sleep.

O GLORIOUS tide, O hospitable tide
On whose moon-heaving breast my head hath lain,
Lest I, all eased of wounds and washed of stain,
Thro' holy hours, be yet unsatisfied,
Loose me betimes! for in my soul abide
Urgings of memory, and exile's pain
Weighs on me, as the spirit of one slain
May throb for the old strife wherein he died.

Often and evermore across the sea
Of dark and dreams, to fatherlands of day
O speed me! like that outworn king erewhile
From kind Phœacia shoreward bound; for me,
Thy loving healèd Greek, thou too shalt lay —
Beneath the olive boughs of mine own isle.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

Morning and Night.

I.

THE mountain that the morn doth kiss
Glad greets its shining neighbor ;
Lord ! heed the homage of our bliss,
The incense of our labor.

II.

Now the long shadows eastward creep,
The golden sun is setting ;
Take, Lord ! the worship of our sleep,
The praise of our forgetting.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

Sleep.

SOMNUS — or Morpheus was his name?
I have forgot — I cannot keep
My schoolboy learning: as it came,
It went — I mean the god of sleep.

That god and I were once fast friends,
But now his face I seldom see;
More oft the blessed rain descends
In Egypt, than his dews on me.

Ah me! the joy I had in dreams —
The nightly comfort to forget —
Is mine no more; the morning beams
On eyes like faded asters, wet;

Yes, moistened oft with poisonous tears,
Till the burnt lashes look so few,
You might suppose that threescore years
Were mine, instead of thirty-two!

SLEEP.

Well, I can wait a little more,
  A little longer wake and weep,
Until the welcome grave restore
  The bliss of an unbroken sleep.

Let me remember Him that while
  His tired disciples round him slept —
(The sinless born, that knew no guile!) —
  Watched in Gethsemane, and wept.

THOMAS W. PARSONS.

To a Child, during Sickness.

SLEEP breathes at last from out thee,
My little patient boy;
And balmy rest about thee
Smooths off the day's annoy.
I sit me down, and think
Of all thy winning ways;
Yet almost wish, with sudden shrink,
That I had less to praise.

Thy sidelong pillowed meekness,
Thy thanks to all that aid,
Thy heart, in pain and weakness,
Of fancied faults afraid;
The little trembling hand
That wipes thy quiet tears:
These, these are things that may demand
Dread memories for years.

Sorrows I 've had, severe ones,
I will not think of now;
And calmly, midst my dear ones,
Have wasted with dry brow;

But when thy fingers press
And pat my stooping head,
I cannot bear the gentleness —
The tears are in their bed.

Ah! first-born of thy mother,
When life and hope were new;
Kind playmate of thy brother,
Thy sister, father too;
My light, where'er I go;
My bird, when prison-bound;
My hand-in-hand companion — No,
My prayers shall hold thee round.

To say "He has departed" —
"His voice," — "his face" is gone,
To feel impatient-hearted,
Yet feel we must bear on —
Ah, I could not endure
To whisper of such woe,
Unless I felt this sleep ensure
That it will not be so.

Yes, still he's fixed and sleeping!
This silence too the while —
Its very hush and creeping
Seem whispering us a smile;

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Something divine and dim
    Seems going by one's ear,
Like parting wings of cherubim,
    Who say, " We 've finished here."

LEIGH HUNT.

Love Asleep.

WE reached the grove's deep shadow and there found
Cythera's son in sleep's sweet fetters bound;
Looking like ruddy apples on their tree;
No quiver and no bended bow had he;
These were suspended on a leafy spray.
Himself in cups of roses cradled lay,
Smiling in sleep; while from their flight in air,
The brown bees to his soft lips made repair,
To ply their waxen task and leave their honey there.

LORD NEAVES.
(*From "Greek Poets in English Verse."*)

Sleep.

WHEN the evening shadows creep
Stealthily,
Hiding every hill and dale,
Hiding all things with their veil;
When the shining day doth die,
Sweet is sleep.

When the evening shadows creep
Stealthily,
To the baby in her nest,
Longing for her quiet rest,
Hushed by loving lullaby,
Sweet is sleep.

When the evening shadows creep
Stealthily,
To the weary heart and brain
Bringing tranquil peace again;
All our cares and sorrows fly, —
Sweet is sleep.

DORA READ GOODALE.

Insomnia.

SLUMBER, hasten down this way,
And, ere midnight dies,
Silence lay upon my lips,
Darkness on my eyes.

Send me a fantastic dream;
Fashion me afresh;
Into some celestial thing
Change this mortal flesh.

Well I know one may not choose;
One is helpless still
In the purple realm of Sleep:
Use me as you will.

Let me be a frozen pine
In dead glacier lands;
Let me pant, a leopard stretched
On the Libyan sands.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Silver fin or scarlet wing
  Grant me, either one;
Sink me deep in emerald glooms,
  Lift me to the sun.

Or of me a gargoyle make,
  Face of ape or gnome,
Such as frights the tavern-boor
  Reeling drunken home.

Work on me your own caprice,
  Give me any shape;
Only, Slumber, from myself
  Let myself escape!

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

Insomnia.

E'EN this, Lord, didst thou bless —
This pain of sleeplessness —
The livelong night,
Urging God's gentlest angel from thy side,
That anguish only might with thee abide
Until the light.
Yea, e'en the last and best,
Thy victory and rest,
Came thus to thee;
For 't was while others calmly slept around,
That thou alone in sleeplessness wast found,
To comfort me.

JOHN B. TABB.

Sleep.

O SLEEP, we are beholden to thee, sleep,
Thou bearest angels to us in the night,
Saints out of heaven with palms. Seen by thy light
Sorrow is some old tale that goeth not deep;
Love is a pouting child.

. . . . . .

Sleep, in the world to come how strange 't will be
Never to want, never to wish for thee!

JEAN INGELOW.

Asleep.

NAY, wake him not!
Unfelt our presence near,
Nor falls a whisper on his dreaming ear:
He sees but Sleep's celestial visions clear,
All else forgot.

And who shall say
That, in life's waking dream,
There be not ever near us those we deem
(As now our faces to the Sleeper seem)
Far, far away?

JOHN B. TABB.

DREAMS.

The Slave's Dream.

BESIDE the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand!
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
  Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
  And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
  Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
  The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
  O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
  And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
  And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse as he crushed the reeds
  Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
  Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
  Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
  With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
  At their tempestuous glee.

THE SLAVE'S DREAM.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
  Nor the burning heat of day;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
  And his lifeless body lay,
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
  Had broken and thrown away!

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Sleepless Dreams.

GIRT in dark growths, yet glimmering with one star,
O night desirous as the nights of youth!
Why should my heart within thy spell, forsooth,
Now beat, as the bride's finger-pulses are
Quickened within the girdling golden bar?
What wings are these that fan my pillow smooth?
And why does Sleep, waved back by Joy and Ruth,
Tread softly round and gaze at me from far?

Nay, night deep-leaved! And would Love feign in thee
Some shadowy palpitating grove that bears
Rest for man's eyes and music for his ears?
O lonely night! art thou not known to me,
A thicket hung with masks of mockery
And watered with the wasteful warmth of tears?

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

Life and Duty.

I SLEPT, and dreamed that life was beauty;
I woke, — and found that life was duty.
Was my dream, then, a shadowy lie?
Toil on, sad heart, courageously;
And thou shalt find thy dream shall be
A noon-day light and truth to thee.

ELLEN STURGIS HOOPER.

A Waking Dream.

NOT long ago by night I woke from sleep,
So gently that I thought myself to be
Again at home beside the voiceful sea,
And heard the solemn murmur of the deep.
'T was not a time of storm when great waves leap
Beyond the narrow bounds of stake and tree,
So softly came the music up to me
I could distinguish every curve and sweep.
There was the constant sounding that I knew
Of waves that rolled upon the sandy shore;
Then came a moment's hush as though they all
Were held by force unseen to mortal view,
And backward flowed, as they had done before,
A mingled sound and silence, rise and fall.

RALPH FERNALD LOWE.

The Land of Dreams.

A Song.

A PLEASANT land is the land of dreams,
At the back of the shining air!
It hath summer skies and sheenier streams,
And gardens than Earth's more fair.
And oft as my heart feels weary and sad,
For a rest I wander away
To the realm where it all is happy and glad,
'Neath the light of an endless day.

There I see the faces I knew of old,
The friends that were true and kind;
And we meet as we met ere our hearts grew cold
With the care that is left behind.
For there is no sorrow or doubt or care,
But hope, like a sunrise, gleams,
And shadows come not between us there —
In my wonderful land of dreams.

You may ask the road, but I cannot tell,
Though oft in its track I stray,
And my spirit knoweth the path right well,
And oft doth it long to stay:

But it lies in the womb of the clouds somewhere,
  And in sorrow aye nearer seems;
When my soul would rest from trouble and care,
  It flies to this land of dreams.

JOHN BRIGHT OF CARPENTARIA.

Sonnet.

I HEARD (alas! 't was only in a dream)
Strains — which, as sage Antiquity believed,
By waking ears have sometimes been received,
Wafted adown the wind from lake or stream;
A most melodious requiem, a supreme
And perfect harmony of notes, achieved
By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,
O'er which her pinions shed a silver gleam.
For is she not the votary of Apollo?
And knows she not, singing as he inspires,
That bliss awaits her which the ungenial Hollow
Of the dull earth partakes not, nor desires?
Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the immortal choirs!
She soared, and I awoke, struggling in vain to follow.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

A Dream.

I DREAMED I had a plot of ground,
  Once when I chanced asleep to drop,
And that a green hedge fenced it round,
  Cloudy with roses at the top.

I saw a hundred mornings rise, —
  So far a little dream may reach, —
And spring with summer in her eyes
  Making the chiefest charm of each.

A thousand vines were climbing o'er
  The hedge, I thought, but as I tried
To pull them down, for evermore
  The flowers dropt off the other side!

Waking, I said, these things are signs
  Sent to instruct us that 't is ours
Duly to keep and dress our vines, —
  Waiting in patience for the flowers.

And when the angel feared of all
  Across my hearth its shadow spread,
The rose that climbed my garden wall
  Has bloomed the other side, I said.

ALICE CARY.

To a Sleeping Child.

I.

OH, 'tis a touching thing, to make one weep, —
A tender infant with its curtained eye,
Breathing as it would neither live nor die
With that unchanging countenance of sleep!
As if its silent dream, serene and deep,
Had lined its slumber with a still blue sky,
So that the passive cheeks unconscious lie
With no more life than roses — just to keep
The blushes warm, and the mild, odorous breath.
O blossom boy! so calm is thy repose,
So sweet a compromise of life and death,
'T is pity those fair buds should e'er unclose
For memory to stain their inward leaf,
Tingeing thy dreams with unacquainted grief.

II.

Thine eyelids slept so beauteously, I deemed
No eyes could wake so beautiful as they:
Thy rosy cheeks in such still slumbers lay,
I loved their peacefulness, nor ever dreamed

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Of dimples — for those parted lips so seemed,
I never thought a smile could sweetlier play,
Nor that so graceful life could chase away
Thy graceful death, — till those blue eyes upbeamed.
Now slumber lies in dimpled eddies drowned,
And roses bloom more rosily for joy,
And odorous silence ripens into sound,
And fingers move to sound. — All-beauteous boy!
How thou dost waken into smiles, and prove,
If not more lovely, thou art more like Love!

THOMAS HOOD.

Abou Ben Adhem.

ABOU Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed, —
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!

LEIGH HUNT.

A Ballad of Dreamland.

I HID my heart in a nest of roses,
Out of the sun's ray, hidden apart;
In a softer bed than the soft white snow's is,
Under the roses I hid my heart.
Why would it sleep not? why should it start,
When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?
What made sleep flutter his wings and part?
Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's dart;
Lie still, for the wind on the warm seas dozes,
And the wind is unquieter yet than thou art.
Does a thought in thee still as a thorn's wound smart
Does the fang still fret thee of hope deferred?
What bids the lips of thy sleep dispart?
Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm encloses,
It never was writ in the traveller's chart,
And sweet on its trees as the fruit that grows is,
It never was sold in the merchant's mart.

A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND.

The swallows of dreams through its dim fields dart,
  And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops heard;
No hound's note wakens the wildwood hart,
  Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOI.

In the world of dreams I have chosen my part,
  To sleep for a season and hear no word
Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
  Only the song of a secret bird.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

"She I Love."

SHE I love (alas in vain!)
Floats before my slumbering eyes:
When she comes she lulls my pain,
When she goes, what pangs arise!
Thou whom love, whom memory flies,
Gentle Sleep! prolong thy reign!
If even thus she soothe my sighs,
Never let me wake again!

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

The Soldier's Dream.

OUR bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lowered,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky,
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpowered—
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring fagot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamed it again.

Methought from the battlefield's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roamed on a desolate track;
'T was autumn, and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields, traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fulness of heart.

"Stay, stay with us! rest; thou art weary and worn!"
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

"If there were Dreams to Sell."

If there were dreams to sell
What would you buy?

BEDDOES.

IF there were dreams to sell
Do I not know full well
What I would buy?
Hope's dear delusive spell
Its happy tale to tell,
Joy's fleeting sigh.

I would be young again:
Youth's madding bliss and bane
I would recapture;
Though it were keen with pain,
All else seems void and vain
To that fine rapture.

I would be glad once more,
Slip through an open door
Into Life's glory;
Keep what I spent of yore,
Find what I lost before,
Hear an old story.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

As it one day befell,
Breaking Death's frozen spell,
  Love should draw nigh:
If there were dreams to sell,
Do I not know too well
  What I would buy?

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

Sleep.

O SLEEP, good mother of enchanting dreams,
Within thy soothing arms oh let me lie,
What time the night-wind sings a lullaby,
And the moon kisses down with cooling gleams,
Mine eyelids weary of day's sultry beams;
Then let thy rarest visions come anigh,
Dead hopes fulfilled in perfect radiancy,
Whose fairness all my waking pain redeems;
With Loline let me stray through jasmine bowers,
A balmy world of love whose stars are flowers,
Where zephyrs sigh in such a tender way
They seem to breathe the words we long to say;
And when these dreams have come, good Sleep, ah then
I pray thee do not let me wake again.

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

The Dream.

OUR life is twofold; Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past, — they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power —
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not — what they will,
And shake us with the vision that 's gone by;
The dread of vanish'd shadows — Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind? — The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.

THE DREAM.

I would recall a vision which I dreamed
Perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

LORD BYRON.

The Culprit Fay.

'TIS the hour of fairy ban and spell:
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well;
He has counted them all with click and stroke,
Deep in the heart of the mountain oak,
And he has awakened the sentry elve
Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
And call the fays to their revelry;
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell—
('T was made of the white snail's pearly shell)—
"Midnight comes, and all is well!
Hither, hither wing your way!
'T is the dawn of the fairy day."
They come from beds of lichen green,
They creep from the mullein's velvet screen;
Some on the backs of beetles fly
From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,
Where they swung in their cobweb hammocks high,
And rocked about in the evening breeze;
Some from the hum-bird's downy nest—
They had driven him out by elfin power,
And pillowed on plumes of his rainbow breast,
Had slumbered there till the charmèd hour.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

Sonnet.

WEARY with toil I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tir'd;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind when body's work's expired:
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eye-lids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see,
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new.
Lo! thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee, and for myself, no quiet find.

SHAKESPEARE.

My Little Girl.

MY little girl is nested
Within her tiny bed,
With amber ringlets crested
Around her dainty head.
She lies so calm and stilly,
She breathes so soft and low,
She calls to mind a lily
Half hidden in the snow.

A weary little mortal
Has gone to slumberland;
The pixies at the portal
Have caught her by the hand.
She dreams her broken dolly
Will soon be mended there,
That looks so melancholy
Upon the rocking chair.

I kiss your wayward tresses,
My drowsy little queen,
I know you have caresses
From floating forms unseen.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

O, Angels, let me keep her
To kiss away my cares,
This darling little sleeper,
Who has my love and prayers!

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

The Poet's Dream.

ON a Poet's lips I slept
Dreaming like a love-adept
In the sound his breathing kept;
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,
But feeds on the aërial kisses
Of shapes that haunt Thought's wildernesses.
He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illume
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see what things they be—
But from these create he can
Forms more real than living Man,
Nurslings of Immortality!

P. B. SHELLEY.

The White Island: or Place of the Blest.

IN this world, the Isle of Dreams,
While we sit by sorrow's streams,
Tears and terrors are our themes,
Reciting:

But when once from hence we fly,
More and more approaching nigh
Unto young eternity,
Uniting

In that whiter Island, where
Things are evermore sincere;
Candor here, and lustre there,
Delighting:—

There no monstrous fancies shall
Out of hell and horror call,
To create, or cause at all
Affrighting.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

There in calm and cooling sleep,
We our eyes shall never steep,
But eternal watch shall keep,
Attending

Pleasures such as shall pursue
Me immortalized, and you;
And fresh joys, as never too
Have ending.

ROBERT HERRICK.

Song of Night.

BREAK, Fant'sy, from thy care of cloud
And spread thy purple wings;
Now all the figures are allowed
And various shapes of things;
Create of fairy forms a stream,
It must have blood, but naught of fleam,
And though it be a waking dream,
Yet let it like an odor rise
To all the senses here,
And fall like sleep upon their eyes
Or music in their ear.

BEN JONSON.

Lines to an Indian Air.

I ARISE from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright;
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me — who knows how?
To thy chamber-window, Sweet!

P. B. SHELLEY.

Dream-Pedlary.

IF there were dreams to sell
  What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell;
  Some a light sigh
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
  Only a rose-leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
  Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rung the bell,
  What would you buy?

A cottage lone and still,
  With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
  Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
  Fain would I shake me down.
Were dreams to have at will,
  This would best heal my ill,
This would I buy.

But there were dreams to sell
  Ill didst thou buy;
Life is a dream, they tell,

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Waking, to die.
Dreaming, a dream to prize,
Is wishing ghosts to rise;
And, if I had the spell
To call the buried well,
Which one would I?

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES.

REST

Curfew.

I.

SOLEMNLY, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows,
And quenched is the fire;
Sound fades into silence, —
All footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall!
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all!

MY LADY SLEEPS.

II.

The book is completed,
And closed, like the day;
And the hand that has written it
Lays it away.

Dim grow its fancies;
Forgotten they lie;
Like coals in the ashes,
They darken and die.

Song sinks into silence,
The story is told,
The windows are darkened,
The hearth-stone is cold.

Darker and darker
The black shadows fall;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Evening Hymn.

THOU Whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep!
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close;
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my soul advance;
Make me to sleep a holy trance,
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought;
And with as active vigor run
My course as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death. Oh! make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die:
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with Thee.
And thus assured, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

"Down to Sleep."

NOVEMBER woods are bare and still;
November days are clear and bright;
Each noon burns up the morning's chill;
The morning's snow is gone by night;
Each day my steps grow slow, grow light,
As through the woods I reverent creep,
Watching all things lie "down to sleep."

I never knew before what beds,
Fragrant to smell, and soft to touch,
The forest sifts and shapes and spreads;
I never knew before how much
Of human sound there is in such
Low tones as through the forest sweep
When all wild things lie "down to sleep."

Each day I find new coverlids
Tucked in, and more sweet eyes shut tight;
Sometimes the viewless mother bids
Her ferns kneel down, full in my sight;
I hear their chorus of "good-night;"
And half I smile, and half I weep,
Listening while they "lie down to sleep."

"DOWN TO SLEEP."

November woods are bare and still;
November days are bright and good;
Life's noon burns up life's morning chill;
Life's night rests feet which long have stood;
Some warm soft bed, in field or wood,
The mother will not fail to keep,
Where we can "lay us down to sleep."

HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

Dream-Land.

WHERE sunless rivers weep
Their waves into the deep,
She sleeps a charmèd sleep:
Awake her not.
Led by a single star,
She came from very far
To seek where shadows are
Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,
She left the fields of corn,
For twilight cold and lorn
And water springs.
Through sleep, as through a veil,
She sees the sky look pale,
And hears the nightingale
That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest
Shed over brow and breast;
Her face is toward the west,
The purple land.

DREAM-LAND.

She cannot see the grain
Ripening on hill and plain;
She cannot feel the rain
  Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, forevermore
Upon a mossy shore;
Rest, rest at the heart's core
  Till time shall cease:
Sleep that no pain shall wake,
Night that no morn shall break,
Till joy shall overtake
  Her perfect peace.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

Sleep.

LULL me to sleep, ye winds, whose fitful sound
Seems from some faint Æolian harpstring caught;
Seal up the hundred wakeful eyes of thought
As Hermes with his lyre in sleep profound
The hundred wakeful eyes of Argus bound;
For I am weary, and am overwrought
With too much toil, with too much care distraught,
And with the iron crown of anguish crowned.
Lay thy soft hand upon my brow and cheek,
O peaceful Sleep! until from pain released
I breathe again uninterrupted breath!
Ah, with what subtile meaning did the Greek
Call thee the lesser mystery at the feast
Whereof the greater mystery is death!

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

My Lady Sleeps.

AH, happy-hearted bird,
Full-throated minstrel, shaking all the air
With golden ripples of thy passions pleading;
I tell thee true, my lady is not heeding;
She lies asleep, within her window there;
Good sooth — thou art not heard.
Thou living memory of her kindly care,
The small white hand, which once had gifts to share,
Will never hold forth morsels for thy feeding
In sad hereafter days;
Nor pluck the roses by her lattice creeping.
So slow the curtain sways,
Not strange, it seemeth now, she should be sleeping;
So soft the sweet air strays,
So fair she lies.
And in her room the Silences are keeping
A watch upon her eyes,
And with forgetful balm their light-lids steeping
Lest she should wake and rise.
The roses she last gathered, now, are weeping
Upon my lady's breast;

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Close to the foam-like laces of her gown,
Their silent lips are pressed,
And drops of dew, like fragrant tears, slip down
Between the moveless snowy billows there
Which heave no more, for rapture, nor despair.

Nor storm nor sunshine, rain, nor falling dew,
Nor stirring leaves, nor voice of friend or foe,
Nor surge of all the worlds, shall enter through
The stillness guarding now that slumberer fair;
Whose heart knows now no guest,
Nor any ray nor shadow, weal, nor woe.

Cease, cease thy song, sweet bird, far hence, fly thou;
Where Nature keeps
Her June-day revel, in fair fields new drest;
Thy mate awaits thee there:
There Summer spreads her dappled robes anew;
There bends, with snowy crest,
The pliant elder, where the sweet winds blow;
There hangs thy nest
Amidst the leafage, on some swaying bough;
There haply thou, love-blest,
Mayst soon forget: — farewell — she marks not now;
Thou canst not break the calm which wraps her brow;
My lady sleeps,
At rest! At rest! At rest! ! !

ROBERT BURNS WILSON.

The Lotos-Eaters.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass;
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes:
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,

And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm:
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

. . . . . .

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

. . . . . .

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

The Long Day Closes.

NO star is o'er the lake
  Its pale watch keeping;
The moon is half awake,
  Through gray mist creeping;
The last red leaves fall round
  The porch of roses;
The clock hath ceased to sound:
  The long day closes.

Sit by the silent hearth,
  In calm endeavor
To count the sounds of mirth
  Now dumb forever.
Heed not how hope believes,
  And fate disposes;
Shadow is round the eaves:
  The long day closes.

The lighted windows dim
  Are fading slowly;
The fire that was so trim
  Now quivers lowly.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Go to the dreamless bed
  Where grief reposes;
Thy book of toil is read:
  The long day closes.

ANON.

"Soldier, Rest!"

"SOLDIER, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking:
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here 's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."

. . . . . .

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveillé."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

To the Night.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear
Which make thee terrible and dear, —
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray
Star-inwrought;
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city and sea and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand —
Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sigh'd for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary day turn'd to his rest
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sigh'd for thee.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Thy brother Death came, and cried
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me? — and I replied
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon —
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night —
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

P. B. SHELLEY.

The Sleeping Beauty.

FROM "THE DAY DREAM."

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purpled coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her tranced form
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl:
The slumberous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broidered coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
Glows forth each softly-shadowed arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright:
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with light.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

III.

She sleeps; her breathings are not heard
  In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirred
  That lie upon her charmed heart.
She sleeps: on either hand upswells
  The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest:
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
  A perfect form in perfect rest.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

"Calm be thy Sleep."

CALM be thy sleep as infants' slumbers!
Pure as angel thoughts thy dreams!
May every joy this bright world numbers
Shed o'er thee their mingled beams!
Or if, where Pleasure's wing hath glided,
There ever must some pang remain,
Still be thy lot with me divided, —
Thine all the bliss, and mine the pain!

Day and night my thoughts shall hover
Round thy steps where'er they stray;
As, ev'n when clouds his idol cover,
Fondly the Persian tracks its ray.
If this be wrong, if Heav'n offended
By worship to its creature be,
Then let my vows to both be blended,
Half breath'd to Heaven and half to thee.

THOMAS MOORE.

Sleep.

" He giveth his beloved sleep."
Psalm cxxvi. 2.

OF all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
Among the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this, —
" He giveth his belovèd sleep " ?

What would we give to our beloved ?
The hero's heart, to be unmoved, —
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep, —
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse, —
The monarch's crown, to light the brows ?
" He giveth *his* belovèd sleep."

What do we give to our beloved ?
A little faith, all undisproved, —
A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories, to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake,
" He giveth *his* belovèd sleep."

SLEEP.

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep;
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
"He giveth *his* belovèd sleep."

O earth, so full of dreary noise!
O men, with wailing in your voice!
O delvèd gold the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And "giveth his belovèd sleep."

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap;
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
"He giveth his belovèd sleep."

For me, my heart, that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on his love repose
Who "giveth his belovèd sleep."

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Wanderer's Night-Songs.

FROM GOETHE.

I.

THOU that from the heavens art,
  Every pain and sorrow stillest,
And the doubly wretched heart
  Doubly with refreshment fillest,
I am weary with contending!
  Why this rapture and unrest?
Peace descending
  Come, ah, come into my breast!

II.

O'er all the hill-tops
  Is quiet now,
In all the tree-tops
  Hearest thou
Hardly a breath;
  The birds are asleep in the trees:
  Wait: soon like these:
Thou too shalt rest.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

From Henry IV. Part I. Act III. Sc. I.

SHE bids you on the wanton rushes lay you down,
And rest your gentle head upon her lap,
And she will sing the song that pleaseth you,
And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,
Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness;
Making such difference 'twixt wake and sleep,
As is the difference betwixt day and night,
The hour before the heavenly-harness'd team
Begins his golden progress in the east.

SHAKESPEARE.

"Il Penseroso."

THUS, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic Boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of fine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heavèd stroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honey'd thigh

That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid:
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.

JOHN MILTON.

Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep.

ROCKED in the cradle of the deep
I lay me down in peace to sleep;
Secure I rest upon the wave,
For thou, O Lord! hast power to save.
I know thou wilt not slight my call,
For Thou dost mark the sparrow's fall;
And calm and peaceful shall I sleep,
Rocked in the cradle of the deep.

When in the dead of night I lie
And gaze upon the trackless sky,
The star-bespangled heavenly scroll,
The boundless waters as they roll, —
I feel thy wondrous power to save
From perils of the stormy wave:
Rocked in the cradle of the deep,
I calmly rest and soundly sleep.

And such the trust that still were mine,
Though stormy winds sweep o'er the brine,
Or though the tempest's fiery breath
Roused me from sleep to wreck and death.

ROCKED IN THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP.

In ocean cave, still safe with Thee
The germ of immortality!
And calm and peaceful shall I sleep,
Rocked in the cradle of the deep.

EMMA HART WILLARD.

Good Night.

CLOSE now thine eyes, and rest secure;
Thy soul is safe enough; thy body sure;
He that loves thee, He that keeps
And guards thee, never slumbers, never sleeps.
And smiling Conscience in a sleeping breast
Has only peace, has only rest;
The music and the mirth of kings
Are all but very discords, when she sings:
Then close thine eyes and rest secure;
No sleep so sweet as thine, no rest so sure.

FRANCIS QUARLES.

At Sea.

THE night is made for cooling shade,
For silence and for sleep;
And when I was a child, I laid
My hands upon my breast and prayed,
And sank to slumbers deep:
Child-like as then I lie to-night,
And watch my lonely cabin light.

Each movement of the swaying lamp
Shows how the vessel reels,
As o'er her deck the billows tramp,
And all her timbers strain and cramp,
With every shock she feels.
It starts and shudders, while it burns,
And in its hingèd socket turns.

Now swinging slow, and slanting low,
It almost level lies;
And yet I know, while to and fro
I watch the seeming pendule go
With restless fall and rise,
The steady shaft is still upright,
Poising its little globe of light.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

O hand of God! O lamp of peace!
O promise of my soul!
Though weak, and tossed, and ill at ease,
Amid the roar of smiting seas,
The ship's convulsive roll,
I own, with love and tender awe,
Yon perfect type of perfect law!

A heavenly trust my spirit calms,
My soul is filled with light:
The ocean sings his solemn psalms,
The wild winds chant: I cross my palms,
Happy as if, to-night,
Under the cottage roof, again
I heard the soothing summer rain.

J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

Darkness.

COME, blessed Darkness, come and bring thy balm
For eyes grown weary of the garish Day!
Come with thy soft slow steps, thy garments gray,
Thy veiling shadows, bearing in thy palm
The poppy-seeds of slumber, deep and calm!
Come with thy patient stars, whose far-off ray
Steals the hot fever of the soul away, —
Thy stillness, sweeter than a chanted psalm!

O blessed Darkness, Day indeed is fair,
And light is dear when summer days are long,
And one by one the harvesters go by;
But so is rest sweet and surcease from care,
And folded palms, and hush of even song,
And all the unfathomed silence of the sky!

JULIA C. R. DORR.

Night.

THE sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine;
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.
The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen, they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are cover'd warm,
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them from all harm:—

NIGHT.

If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

An Evening Prayer.

THE night is come; like to the day,
Depart not thou, great God, away.
Let not my sins, black as the night,
Eclipse the lustre of thy light.
Keep still in my horizon: for to me
The sun makes not the day, but Thee.
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep:
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close.
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
Whilst I do rest, my soul advance;
Make my sleep a holy trance;
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought.
And with as active vigor run
My course, as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death, O make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die:
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.

AN EVENING PRAYER.

Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with Thee.
And thus assured, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again:
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep thus again, but wake for ever.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

Night.

HOW colorless the sky and dreary,
Which wore by day a smile so bright!
The clouds, as if of tears aweary,
Like beggars mute sweep through the night.

Their little heads the flowers hang sleeping;
Not e'en one leaf moves on the tree;
Only the waves, to my feet creeping,
Exchange soft kisses dreamily.

The forest stands in deepest silence,
The birds have long since ceased to sing;
But faintly, from the ghostly distance,
The breeze a bell's low note doth bring.

Upon the moss in worship blissful
I kneel; my tears like dew-drops fall.
Oh, holy nights, calm, starless, peaceful,
How fervently I love ye all!

JOHANNA AMBROSIUS.

BEDTIME SONGS.

A Child's Evensong.

THE sun is weary, for he ran
So far and fast to-day;
The birds are weary, for who sang
So many songs as they?
The bees and butterflies at last
Are tired out, for just think too
How many gardens through the day
Their little wings have fluttered through.
And so, as all tired people do,
They 've gone to lay their sleepy heads
Deep, deep in warm and happy beds.
The sun has shut his golden eye
And gone to sleep beneath the sky,
The birds and butterflies and bees
Have all crept into flowers and trees,
And all lie quiet, still as mice,
Till morning comes — like father's voice.

So Geoffrey, Owen, Phyllis, you
Must sleep away till morning too.
Close little eyes, down little heads,
And sleep — sleep — sleep in happy beds.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

Lullaby.

LULLABY, oh, lullaby!
Flowers are closed and lambs are sleeping;
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Stars are up, the moon is peeping;
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
While the birds are silence keeping,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Sleep, my baby, fall a-sleeping,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

A Cradle Song.

SWEET dreams, form a shade
O'er thy lovely infant's head!
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
By happy silent moony beams!

Sweet sleep, with soft down
Weave thy brows an infant crown!
Sweet sleep, angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child!

Sweet smiles, in the night,
Hover over my delight!
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,
All the live-long night beguile.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thine eyes!
Sweet moan, sweeter smile,
All the dovelike moans beguile.

Sleep, sleep, happy child!
All creation slept and smiled!
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee doth mother weep.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace:
Sweet babe, once like thee
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me:

Wept for me, for thee, for all,
When he was an infant small.
Thou his image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,
Who became an infant small;
Infant smiles are his own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Welsh Lullaby.

(Y Fam a' i Batan.)

THE mother yields her little babe to sleep
Upon her tender breast,
And singing still a lullaby,
Hushes its heart to rest:
"O sleep in peace upon my bosom,
And sweetly may your small dreams blossom:
And from the fears that made me weep you,
And from all pains, as soft you sleep you,
The angels lightly guard and keep you,
And hold you blest!

"Your mother, dear, is often full of fear,
As the moments run;
Her love entwines so close, ah dear, —
Dearest little one.
Her song is in its music weeping,
To think of death and its dark keeping,
That yet might turn those red cheeks white, —
Life's rose, that grows so in her sight, —
And your bright eyes, like morning light,
Dearest little one!"

ERNEST RHYS.

German Cradle Song.

SLEEP, little angel, so dear to my sight,
Close those blue eyes overflowing with light;
Stillness of death over everything lies,
Sleep now, while mother's hand guards thee from flies.

Joys and delights seem around thee to flow,
Darling, such dreams will not last, thou must know;
Once when thy pillow is haunted by care,
Then will thy dreams be no longer so fair.

Angels as radiant as thou, my dear love,
Watch round thy bedside, and smile from above;
Later in life they 'll descend from the skies,
Only to wipe the salt tears from thine eyes.

Sleep, my own dear one, if night comes on fast,
Mother is near thee to watch till 't is past;
Be it the night-time or be it the day,
Mother's love, sweet heart, is waking alway.

A Sicilian Lullaby.

MY little son, I wish you well, your mother's comfort when in grief.
My pretty boy, what can I do? Will you not give one hour's relief?
Sleep has just past, and me he asked if this my son in slumber lay.
Close, close your little eyes, my child; send your sweet breath far leagues away.
You are the fount of rose water; you are with every beauty fraught.
Sleep, darling son, my pretty one, my golden button richly wrought.

Nannarisma.

HUSH, hush, my little babe!
And thou shalt have in a trice,
Alexandria for thy sugar,
And Cairo for thy rice.

The great Constantinople,
For three long years of pleasure,
Three Asiatic cities,
To fill thy chest with treasure.

Three provinces around,
Their tribute duly bringing,
Three mountain monasteries
With three tall belfries ringing.

Lullaby from Provence.

SLEEP, sleep, sleep, come, come, come!
Sleep, sleep, come from anywhere.

Still sleep, sleep, away does fly,
My little one awake does lie.

In your ear
Listens sleep.
At last it comes
Through your brow so deep.

Sleep, sleep, come, come, come!
Sleep, sleep, come from anywhere!

Sleep, sleep, at last has come,
Quiet lies my little one.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, come, come, come!
Sleep, sleep, come from anywhere!

Spanish Lullaby.

THE Baby Child of Mary,
Now cradle he has none;
His father is a carpenter,
And he shall make him one.

The lady good St. Anna,
The lord St. Joachim,
They rock the Baby's cradle,
That sleep may come to him.

Then sleep thou too, my baby,
My little heart so dear
The Virgin is beside thee,
The Son of God is near.

Scotch Cradle Song.

A Croon.

HUSH-A-BA, birdie, croon, croon,
Hush-a-ba, birdie, croon,
The sheep are gane to the silver wood,
And the cows are gane to the broom, broom.

And it 's braw milking the kye, kye,
It 's braw milking the kye,
The birds are singing, the bells are ringing,
And the wild deer come galloping by, by.

And hush-a-ba, birdie, croon, croon,
Hush-a-ba, birdie, croon,
The gaits are gane to the mountain hie,
And they 'll no be hame till noon, noon.

An Old Man's Lullaby.

GOLDEN slumbers kiss your eyes,
Smiles awake you when you rise.
Sleep, pretty wantons; do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby:
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

Care is heavy, therefore sleep you;
You are care, and care must keep you.
Sleep, pretty wantons; do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby:
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

THOMAS DEKKER.

The Madonna's Lullaby.

SLEEP, oh sleep, dear Baby mine,
King divine;
Sleep, my child, in sleep recline;
Lullaby, mine infant fair,
Heaven's King
All glittering,
Full of grace as lilies rare.

Beauty mine, sleep peacefully;
Heaven's Monarch see!
With my veil I cover thee.
Lullaby, my spouse, my Lord,
Fairest child,
Pure, undefiled,
Thou by all my soul adored.

Sleep, sleep, thou who dost Heaven impart,
My Lord thou art:
Sleep as I press thee to my heart,
Poor the place where thou dost lie,
Earth's loveliest!
—Yet take thy rest;
Sleep, my child, and lullaby.

Irish Cradle Song.

(SHOHEEN SHO.)

I 'LL put you myself, my baby! to slumber,
Not as is done by the clownish number,
A yellow blanket and coarse sheet bringing,
But in golden cradle that 's softly swinging —
To and fro, lulla lo,
To and fro, my bonny baby!
To and fro, lulla lo,
To and fro, my bonny baby!

I 'll put you myself, my baby! to slumber,
On sunniest day of the pleasant summer;
Your golden cradle on smooth lawn laying,
'Neath murmuring boughs that the winds are swaying.
To and fro, lulla lo, etc.

Slumber, my babe! may the sweet sleep woo you,
And from your slumbers may health come to you!
May all diseases now flee and fear you;
May sickness and sorrow never come near you!
To and fro, lulla lo, etc.

IRISH CRADLE SONG.

Slumber, my babe! may the sweet sleep woo you,
And from your slumbers may health come to you!
May bright dreams come, and come no other,
And I be never a childless mother—
To and fro, lulla lo,
To and fro, my bonny baby,
To and fro, lulla lo,
To and fro, my own sweet baby.

Cradle Song.

ALL by the side of the wide wild river
  Surging sad through the sodden land,
There be the black reeds washing together—
  Washing together in rain and sand;
Going, blowing, flowing, together—
  Rough are the winds and the tide runs high—
Hush, little babe, in thy silken cradle—
  Lull lull, lull lull, lull lullaby!

Father is riding home, little baby,
  Riding home through the wind and rain;
Flinty hoofs on the flag stems beating
  Thrum like a flail on the golden grain.
All in the wild, wet reeds of the lowlands,
  Dashed and plashed with the freezing foam,
There be the blood-red wings of the starlings
  Shining to light and lead him home.

Spurring hard o'er the grass-gray ridges—
  Slacking rein in the low, wet land,
Where be the black reeds washing together—
  Washing together in rain and sand.

CRADLE SONG.

Down of the yellow-throated creeper —
  Plumes of the woodcock, green and black —
Boughs of salix, and combs of honey —
  These be the gifts he is bearing back.

Yester morning four sweet ground-doves
  Sung so gay to their nest in the wall —
Oh, by the moaning, and oh, by the droning,
  The wild, wild water is over them all.
Come, O morning, come with thy roses,
  Flame like a burning bush in the sky —
Hush, little babe, in thy silken cradle —
  Lull lull, lull lull, lull lullaby!

ALICE CARY.

Falling to Sleep.

EVENING is falling to sleep in the west,
Lulling the golden-brown meadows to rest;
Twinkle like diamonds the stars in the skies,
Greeting the two little slumbering eyes.
Sweetly sleep; Jesus doth keep;
And Jesus will give His beloved ones sleep.

Now all the flowers have gone to repose,
Closed are the sweet cups of lily and rose;
Blossoms rocked lightly on evening's mild breeze,
Drowsily, dreamily swinging the trees.
Sweetly sleep; Jesus doth keep;
And Jesus will give His beloved ones sleep.

Sleep till the flowers shall open once more;
Sleep till the lark in the morning shall soar;
Sleep till the morning sun, lighting the skies,
Bids thee from sweet repose joyfully rise.
Sweetly sleep; Jesus doth keep;
And Jesus will give His beloved ones sleep.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Sweet and Low.

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the summer sea;
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest;
Father will come to thee soon.
Rest, rest on mother's breast;
Father will come to thee soon.
Father will come to his babe in the nest,—
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon!
Sleep, my little one; sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

TENNYSON.

Good-night and Good-morning.

A FAIR little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see;
Then smoothed her work and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work, good-night, good-night!"

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying "Caw! caw!" on their way to bed,
She said, as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things, good-night, good-night!"

The horses neighed and the oxen lowed,
The sheep's "Bleat! bleat!" came over the road;
All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
"Good little girl, good-night, good-night!"

She did not say to the sun "Good-night!"
Though she saw him there like a ball of light;
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

GOOD-NIGHT AND GOOD-MORNING.

The tall pink foxglove bowed his head;
The violets curtsied and went to bed,
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said, on her knees, her favorite prayer.

And, while on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day;
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
"Good-morning, good-morning! our work is begun."

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES.

Little Birdie.

WHAT does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
"Let me fly," says little birdie,
"Mother, let me fly away."
"Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger."
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
"Let me rise and fly away."
"Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby, too, shall fly away."

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MY LADY SLEEPS.

Lullaby, Lullaby,
Baby must sleep; —
Baby by Heaven blest!
Cares trouble not thy breast;
Nought shall disturb thy rest;
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Lullaby, Lullaby,
Baby must sleep; —
Mother will watch and pray,
Danger may keep away,
Until the dawn of day;
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Lullaby, Lullaby,
Baby must sleep; —
Forms that we cannot see,
Loving, are watching thee;
Thus may it ever be!
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Lullaby, Lullaby,
Baby must sleep; —
God answers from the skies,
Mother's fond prayers that rise;
Baby must close his eyes; —
Sleep, baby, sleep.

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"Sleep, Baby, Sleep."

SLEEP, baby, sleep!
Thy father watches the sheep,
Thy mother is shaking the dreamland tree,
And down drops a little dream for thee,
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Sleep, baby, sleep!
The large stars are the sheep,
The little stars are the lambs, I guess,
The bright moon is the shepherdess,
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Sleep, baby, sleep!
And cry not like a sheep,
Else the sheep-dog will bark and whine,
And bite this naughty child of mine,
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Sleep, baby, sleep!
The Saviour loves his sheep;
He is the Lamb of God on high,
Who for our sakes came down to die,
Sleep, baby, sleep.

"SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP."

Sleep, baby, sleep!
Away, to tend the sheep,
Away, thou sheep-dog, fierce and wild,
And do not harm my sleeping child!
Sleep, baby, sleep.

FROM THE GERMAN,
BY ELIZABETH PRENTISS.

Lullaby on an Infant Chief.

OH, hush thee, my baby, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers we see,
They all are belonging, dear baby, to thee.

Oh, fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy bed.

Oh, hush thee, my baby, the time will soon come
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and drum;
Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and waking with day.

SCOTT.

Lullaby.

COME to my arms, you bewildering elf!
Let me gather you, body and soul, to myself;
Bury your scintillant eyes and hair,
And all the glory and grace you wear,
From twinkling feet to golden crown;
Clasping you close to my bosom and heart,
A thing of my holiest being a part,
Crooning a song in olden rhyme,
Tender and sweet as a vesper chime.

Sleep, baby boy;
The little birds rest,
Downy and soft,
In the mother-bird's nest;
The lambkins are safe
In the shepherd's warm fold;
The dew-drops asleep
In the buttercup's gold.

The violet nods
To the daisy's dream;
The lily lies hushed
On the lap of the stream;

MY LADY SLEEPS.

And holy and calm,
Like motherly eyes,
The stars look down
From the silent skies.

Sleep, baby boy,
My birdling, my flower,
My lily, my lambkin,
My dew-drop, my dower!
While heart against heart
Beats softly in time
To the murmuring flow
Of my tender rhyme.

MARY FORREST.

Rock me to Sleep.

BACKWARD — turn backward, O Time! in your flight:
Make me a child again just for to-night!
Mother, come back from the echoless shore;
Take me again to your heart as of yore;
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care;
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep;
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep!

Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years!
I am so weary of toils and of tears, —
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain;
Take them, and give me my childhood again!
I have grown weary of dust and decay;
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;
Weary of sowing for others to reap;
Rock me to sleep again, rock me to sleep!

Over my heart in the days that are flown,
No love like mother-love ever has shone;
No other worship abides and endures,
Faithful, unselfish, and patient, like yours.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

None like a mother can charm away pain
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain;
Slumber's soft calm o'er my heavy lids creep:
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep!

Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;
Let it fall over my forehead to-night,
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;
For, with its sunny-edged shadows once more,
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore.
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep;
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep.

Clasped to your arms in a loving embrace,
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,
Never hereafter to wake or to weep,
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep!

ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Sleepy Man.

WHEN the sleepy man comes with the dust on his eyes
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
He shuts up the earth, and he opens the skies.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

He smiles through his fingers, and shuts up the sun;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
The stars that he loves he lets out one by one.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

He comes from the castles of Drowsy-boy Town;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
At the touch of his hand the tired eyelids fall down.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

He comes with a murmur of dream in his wings
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
And whispers of mermaids and wonderful things.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

Then the top is a burden, the bugle a bane
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
When one would be faring down Dream-a-way Lane,
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

Mary's Manger-Song.

SLEEP, my little Jesus,
On thy bed of hay,
While the shepherds homeward
Journey on their way!
Mother is thy shepherd
And will vigil keep:
O, did the angels wake thee?
Sleep, my Jesus, sleep!

Sleep, my little Jesus,
While thou art my own!
Ox and ass thy neighbors,—
Shalt thou have a throne?
Will they call me blessed?
Shall I stand and weep?
O, be it far, Jehovah!
Sleep, my Jesus, sleep!

Sleep, my little Jesus,
Wonder-baby mine!
Well the singing angels
Greet thee as divine.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Through my heart, as heaven,
  Low the echoes sweep
Of Glory to Jehovah!
  Sleep, my Jesus, sleep!

WILLIAM C. GANNETT.

Barbara's Lullaby.

LULLABY,
The night is nigh,
Low and slow the herons fly;
Sleep and rest,
In the west
All the sunset fires die.

Down canyons steep
The white fogs creep
And blanket all the pine-trees deep;
Through the grass
Wind-songs pass
While the night-capped poppies sleep.

Hush thee, dear!
The dark is near,
All the oak-trees disappear;
Dim bats fly, —
Then lullaby,
The red lights blossom, — the night is here.

CAROLUS AGER.
(*Charles Kellogg Field.*)

Upon my Lap my Sovereign Sits.

UPON my lap my sovereign sits
And sucks upon my breast;
Meantime his love maintains my life
And gives my sense her rest.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

When thou hast taken thy repast,
Repose, my babe, on me;
So may thy mother and thy nurse
Thy cradle also be.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

I grieve that duty doth not work
All that my wishing would,
Because I would not be to thee
But in the best I should.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

UPON MY LAP MY SOVEREIGN SITS.

Yet as I am, and as I may,
  I must and will be thine,
Though all too little for thy self
  Vouchsafing to be mine.
    Sing lullaby, my little boy,
    Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

ANON.

A Cradle Song.

SLEEP, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart doth rest.

Oh, the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart doth wake,
Then the dreadful light shall break.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

A Cradle Song.

SING it, Mother! sing it low:
Deem it not an idle lay.
In the heart 't will ebb and flow
All the life-long way.

Sing it, Mother! softly sing,
While he slumbers on thy knee;
All that after-years may bring
Shall flow back to thee.

Sing it, Mother! Love is strong
When the tears of manhood fall,
Echoes of thy cradle song
Shall its peace recall.

Sing it, Mother! when his ear
Catcheth first the Voice Divine,
Dying, he may smile to hear
What he deemeth thine.

JOHN B. TABB.

Mother Song.

SOFT sleeps the earth in moonlight blest;
Soft sleeps the bough above the nest;
O'er lonely depths the whippoorwill
Breathes one faint note and all is still.
Sleep, little darling; night is long —
Sleep while I sing thy cradle song.

About thy dream the drooping flower
Blows her sweet breath from hour to hour,
And white the great moon spreads her wings,
While low, while far, the dear earth swings.
Sleep, little darling; all night long
The winds shall sing thy slumber song.

Powers of the earth and of the air
Shall have thee in their mother-care,
And hosts of heaven, together prest,
Bend over thee, their last, their best.
Hush, little darling; from the deep
Some mighty wing shall fan thy sleep.

HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

Slumber Song.

GENTLY fall the shadows gray,
Daylight softly, softly veiling;
Now to Dreamland we 'll away, —
Sailing, sailing, sailing.

Little eyes were made for sleeping,
Little heads were made for rest,
Golden locks were made for keeping
Close to Mother's breast;
Little hands were made for folding,
Little lips should never sigh;
What dear Mother's arms are holding
Love alone can buy.

Gently fall the shadows gray,
Daylight softly, softly veiling,
Now to Dreamland we 'll away, —
Sailing, sailing, sailing.

ARTHUR MACY.

"Sleep, Baby, Sleep."

SLEEP, baby, sleep, what ails my dear,
What ails my darling, thus to cry?
Be still, my dear, and lend thine ear
To hear me sing thy lullaby;
My pretty lamb, forbear to weep,
Be still, my dear, sleep, baby, sleep.

When God with us was dwelling here,
In little babes he took delight,
Such innocents as thou, my dear,
Are ever precious in His sight,
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep,
Be still, my dear, sleep, baby, sleep.

CLAYTON JOHNS.

"For the Slumber Islands, ho!"

A LITTLE song for bedtime,
When, robed in gowns of white,
All sleepy little children
Set sail across the night
For that pleasant, pleasant country,
Where the pretty dream-flowers blow,
'Twixt the sunset and the sunrise,
"For the Slumber Islands, ho!"

When the little ones get drowsy,
And the heavy lids droop down
To hide blue eyes and black eyes,
Gray eyes and eyes of brown,
A thousand boats for Dreamland
Are waiting in a row,
And the ferryman is calling,
"For the Slumber Islands, ho!"

Then the sleepy little children
Fill the boats along the shore,
And go sailing off to Dreamland,
While the dipping of the oar

MY LADY SLEEPS.

In the sea of sleep, makes music
  That the children only know,
When they listen to the boatman's
  "For the Slumber Islands, ho!"

Oh! take a kiss, my darlings,
  Ere you sail away from me
In the boat of dreams that's waiting
  To bear me o'er the sea.
Oh! take a kiss and give one,
  And then — away — you go —
A-sailing — off — to — Dreamland!
  "For the Slumber Islands, ho!"

The Child Asleep.

FROM THE FRENCH.

SWEET babe! true portrait of thy father's face,
Sleep on the bosom that thy lips have pressed.
Sleep, little one; and closely, gently place
Thy drowsy eyelid on thy mother's breast.

Upon that tender eye, my little friend,
Soft sleep shall come, that cometh not to me!
I watch to see thee, nourish thee, defend;
'T is sweet to watch for thee, alone for thee!

His arms fall down; sleep sits upon his brow;
His eye is closed; he sleeps, nor dreams of harm.
Wore not his cheek the apple's ruddy glow,
Would you not say he slept on Death's cold arm?

Awake, my boy! I tremble with affright!
Awake, and chase this fatal thought! Unclose
Thine eye but for one moment on the light!
Even at the price of thine, give me repose!

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Sweet error! he but slept, I breathe again;
  Come, gentle dreams, the hour of sleep beguile!
O, when shall he, for whom I sigh in vain,
  Beside me watch to see thy waking smile?

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Slumber Song.

THOU little child, with tender, clinging arms,
Drop thy sweet head, my darling, down and rest
Upon my shoulder, rest with all thy charms;
Be soothed and comforted, be loved and blessed.

Against thy silken, honey-colored hair
I lean a loving cheek, a mute caress;
Close, close I gather thee and kiss thy fair
White eyelids, sleep so softly doth oppress.

Dear little face, that lies in calm content
Within the gracious hollow that God made
In every human shoulder, where He meant
Some tired head for comfort should be laid!

Most like a heavy-folded rose thou art,
In summer air reposing, warm and still.
Dream thy sweet dreams upon my quiet heart;
I watch thy slumber; naught shall do thee ill.

CELIA THAXTER

Slumber Song.

COME, sweet Sleep, from afar—
Not with footsteps that delay,
For thy wool-soft sandals are
Over-slow upon their way.
On thy floating dusky hair
Wreaths of poppies thou dost set,
That we mortals may forget
Waking hours and all their care.
From afar, come, sweet Sleep!

Come, sweet Sleep, on a steed,
One that weareth golden wings,
That on asphodel doth feed
And doth drink at heavenly springs.
Ride not through the ivory gate,
Come to us through gates of horn,
Bring good dreams made true at morn,
Even though the morn be late.
On thy steed, come, sweet Sleep!

Gentle Sleep, weave a wreath
Of thy drowsiest poppy flowers,
Bind it over and beneath
The incessant fleeting hours.

SLUMBER SONG.

Set thy lips against their face,
  Whisper to them, light and low,
  Plead for us before they go
That they stay a little space.
  Weave a wreath, gentle Sleep!

Haste thee, Sleep, do not wait,
  For the night is near its noon:
Thou wilt find us over-late
  So thou dost not seek us soon.
For the cock begins to crow
  At the earliest beam of light;
  Then with every other sprite,
Thou, a gentle ghost, must go.
  Do not wait, haste thee, Sleep!

Take us, Sleep, on thy horse —
  As a mother, journeying,
Holds her babe and on her course
  Lullaby doth softly sing.
Let thine hair fall round thy face
  Veiling visions in thine eyes,
  Carry us to Paradise
At thy steed's most quiet pace.
  On thy horse, take us, Sleep!

ELIZABETH CAVAZZA.

Lullaby.

SEAL up her eyes, O Sleep, but flow
Mild as her manners to and fro;
Slide softly into her that she
May receive no wound from thee.
And ye, present her thoughts, O Dreams,
With hushing winds and purling streams,
Whilst hovering Silence sits without
Careful to keep disturbance out.
Thus seize her, Sleep, thus her again resign,
So what was Heaven's gift we 'll reckon thine.

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT.

Cradle Song.

HUSH, little sweetheart,
The low winds are sighing,
The voice of the far-off sea
Lulls thee to rest;
Hush, little sweetheart,
The bright day is dying,
Night's weary children
Sleep on her breast.
Lullaby!
Dear brown eye,
Close in sleep. Oh, lullaby!

Dream, little sweetheart,
Bright dreams of sunlight —
Waters that sparkle
And birds calling low;
Dream, little sweetheart,
Of summer days passing,
Ere thou awakest
And happy dreams go.
Lullaby,
Dear brown eye.
Doze to dreamland. Lullaby!

LYLE W. SANDERSON.

"Slumber on, Baby Dear."

SLUMBER on, Baby dear;
Do not hear thy mother's sigh
Breathed for him far away,
Whilst she sings thy lullaby!

Slumber on; o'er thy sleep
Loving eyes will watch with care
In thy dreams may thou see
God's own angels hovering here.

Slumber on: may sweet sleep
Softly on thine eyelids lie,
While I watch, chanting low,
Thy sweet, soothing lullaby.

Slumber on, happy child;
May life's storms pass gently by,
When this voice, hushed and still,
No more sings thy lullaby!

"SLUMBER ON, BABY DEAR."

In this heart torn with grief,
  Lies a doting love for thee:
Father, come, bless our child,
  Sweetly slumbering on my knee.

FROM THE ITALIAN,
BY H. C. WATSON.

To By-Low Land.

MY little dears, the star lamps
Are lighted overhead,
To guide all sleepy children
From the land of Go-to-Bed,
On a most delightful journey;
O, you 'll all be glad to go
To that pleasant, pleasant country
Where the dream-flowers grow.
You 'll find a good steed waiting,
So mount and give command,
And trot away, and trot away
To By-Low Land.

You can go by Sleepy Hollow,
That's the shortest route to take
On the journey you are going,
From the plains of Wideawake.
You 'll be there before you know it;
Shut your drowsy eyes, and lo!
You are in the pleasant country
Where the dream-flowers grow.

TO BY-LOW LAND.

Your good steed 's waiting for you,
  So mount and give command,
And trot away, and trot away
    To By-Low Land.

Ere you start upon your journey,
  Mother wants a hug and kiss
From each drowsy little darling,
  And she softly tells you this—
She 'll be lonesome when you 've left her,
  Though she 's glad to have you go
To that pleasant, pleasant country
  Where the dream-flowers grow.
Your good steed 's tired of waiting,
  So mount and give command,
And trot away, and trot away
    To By-Low Land.

WASHINGTON HOME MAGAZINE.

A Norse Lullaby.

OVER the crust of the hard white snow
The little feet of the reindeer go
(*Hush, hush, the winds are low!*)
And the fine little bells are ringing.
Nothing can reach thee of woe or harm —
Safe is the shelter of mother's arm
(*Hush, hush, the wind's a charm!*)
And mother's voice is singing.

Father is coming, — he rides apace;
Fleet are the steeds with the winds that race
(*Hush, hush, for a little space!*)
The snow to his mantle 's clinging.
His flying steed with the wind 's abreast —
Here by the fire are warmth and rest
(*Hush, hush, in your little nest!*)
And mother's voice is singing.

Over the crust of the snow, hard by,
The little feet of the reindeer fly
(*Hush, hush, the wind is high!*)
And the fine little bells are ringing!

A NORSE LULLABY.

Nothing can reach us of woe or harm —
Safe is the shelter of father's arm
(*Hush, hush, the wind 's a charm!*)
And mother's voice is singing.

M. L. VAN VORST.

Irish Lullaby.

HUSHO, husho! Winds are wild in the willows,
Birds are warm in their downy nests — every bird but you:
Kings' children wake and toss on silken pillows,
You have but a broken roof to keep you from the dew — husho!

Husho, husho! Rain falls cold in the city,
Here rain falls kindly, warm on sleeping eyes —
Husho, husho! even clouds take pity
On my vourneen deelish, and leave you silver skies — husho!

Husho, husho! Silver skies to sail in,
In a boat of amber, warm as any nest;
Ah, but can my cushla find no place to wail in
But the warmest place on earth, and that her mother's breast? Husho, husho!

NORA HOPPER.

Cradle Song.

ENGLISH VERSION BY JOHN P. JACKSON.

THE moonbeams through the window peep,
To see if babe 's in bed;
My precious darling, go to sleep,
He 'll watch keep o'er thy head.
Sleep, darling baby, sleep,
He watch o'er thee will keep.

The brook is murmuring soft and low,
Dew falls on hill and deep;
The birds to rest went long ago,
My precious darling, sleep.

The heather bells all faintly sound,
As moonbeams o'er them sweep;
The shadows nearer creep around,
My darling, go to sleep.
May baby's dream be bright,
Sleep on till morning's light,
Good-night, good-night.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Lullaby.

SLEEP, my little dearest one,
I will guard thy sleep,
Safely little nearest one,
I will hold thee deep
In the great unfathomed sea,
Where sweet dreams are made for thee.

Rest, my little baby dear,
I will watch thy rest,
Thou shalt feel the waters near,
Only on my breast;
In the strong and tender tide,
Still my love shall be thy guide.

DOLLY RADFORD.

Nurse's Song.

WHEN the voices of children are heard on the green,
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still.
Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of night arise;
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies.

"No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
And we cannot go to sleep;
Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,
And the hills are covered with sheep."
— Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
And then go home to bed. —
The little ones leap'd, and shouted, and laugh'd, —
And all the hills echoèd.

WILLIAM BLAKE

"Come, Little Babe."

COME, little babe, come, silly soul,
Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief,
Born as I doubt to all our dole,
And to thyself unhappy chief:
Sing lullaby and lap it warm,
Poor soul that thinks no creature harm.

Thou little think'st, and less dost know
The cause of this thy mother's moan.
Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,
And I myself am all alone.
Why dost thou weep? why doest thou wail?
And know'st not yet what thou dost ail.

Come, little wretch! Ah! silly heart,
Mine only joy, what can I more?
If there be any wrong thy smart,
That may the destinies implore,
'T was I, I say, against my will —
I wail the time, but be thou still.

"COME, LITTLE BABE."

And dost thou smile? O thy sweet face!
  Would God Himself He might thee see!
No doubt thou soon would purchase grace,
  I know right well, for thee and me.
But come to mother, babe, and play,
For father false is fled away.

Sweet boy, if it by fortune chance
  Thy father home again to send,
If Death do strike me with his lance,
  Yet may'st thou me to him commend:
If any ask thy mother's name,
Tell how by love she purchased blame.

Then will his gentle heart soon yield:
  I know him of a noble mind:
Although a lion in the field,
  A lamb in town thou shalt him find:
Ask blessing, babe, be not afraid!
His sugared words hath me betrayed.

Then may'st thou joy and be right glad,
  Although in woe I seem to moan.
Thy father is no rascal lad:
  A noble youth of blood and bone,
His glancing looks, if he once smile,
Right honest women may beguile.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Come, little boy, and rock a-sleep!
  Sing lullaby, and be thou still!
I, that can do naught else but weep,
  Will sit by thee and wail my fill:
God bless my babe, and lullaby
From this thy father's quality.

NICHOLAS BRETON.

The Happy Child.

TOYS, and treats, and pleasures pass,
Like a shadow in a glass,
Like the smoke that mounts on high,
Like a noonday's butterfly.

Mother, fold me to your knees!
How much should I care for these
Little joys that come and go
If you did not love me so?

Father, now my prayer is said,
Lay your hand upon my head!
Pleasures pass from day to day,
But I know that love will stay.

While I sleep it will be near;
I shall wake and find it here;
I shall feel it in the air,
When I say my morning prayer.

And when things are sad or wrong,
Then I know that love is strong;
When I ache, or when I weep,
Then I know that love is deep.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Love is old and love is new,
You love me and I love you;
And the Lord who made it thus,
Did it in His love for us.

WILLIAM BRIGHTY RAND.

Good-Night.

REST, dear one, in slumber light;
Daylight now is slowly dying,
And the wind is softly sighing,
Bringing dreams so sweet and bright.
Good-night, good-night.

May thy heart forget its pain,
All its sighs and troubled longing,
All the cares around it thronging,
Till it rests in peace again.
Good-night, good-night.

Rest until the dawning day
Bids thee rise, new courage bringing;
And thy heart in praise is singing;
Fear not, God will watch alway.
Good-night, good-night.

ALICE LOCKE PITMAN.

The Castles of Drowsy Town.

AWAY in the castles of Drowsy Town
The lights are twinkling high,
The fays are pulling the curtains down
And the winds are wandering by.

The Giant Night in his robe of dusk
Is coming over the hills,
Bringing an odor of rose and musk
And a ripple of distant rills.

This black man is as high as the sky,
And his eyes shoot starry gleams,
And his pockets are ready to burst, well-nigh,
With bundles of children's dreams.

He moves with a soft, mysterious tread,
Thro' the scented dusk and damp,
And he carries the moon upon his head,
As a miner carries a lamp.

And straight for my little ones cometh he
When twilight is dropping down,
And bears them swiftly away from me
To the borders of Drowsy Town.

Oh! the gates are open on ev'ry side,
And the children are trooping in,
With dainty cap-strings cunningly tied
Right under each dimpled chin.

And the fairies gently tuck them away,
In hammocks of lilies and down,
And there they sleepily swing and sway,
In mystical Drowsy Town.

Then the Giant Night in his robe of grey,
Departs for a scene of mirth,
Where brown little Chinese children play,
On the other side of the earth.

So farewell to the castles of Drowsy Town,
And farewell to each winsome fay,
By heath and hill, by dale and by down,
The children are hasting away.

CARRIE SHAW RICE,
Tacoma, Wash.

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